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Extension Service - War Food Administration

## WARTIME EXTENSION WORK

### SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND RESULTS BASED ON STATE REPORTS

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Some items in this week's summary:

- Feeding balanced rations brings farmers 25-percent increase in milk production.
- Home-made sweetpotato planters save labor and do better job. State has twice as many one-variety cotton communities as in 1943.
- Businessmen help with crops and donate wages to volunteer fire departments.

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KENTUCKY  
July 15, 1944

Conferences on balanced livestock and feed:- District conferences of county agricultural agents discussed program for balancing production of livestock and feed. Emphasis was placed on culling inefficient livestock, and increasing feed supplies through alfalfa, barley, and Balbo rye, and by saving corn stover.

Farm labor.- Extension Service helped to obtain more than 8,000 workers to pick strawberries and other fruit, set tobacco, put up hay, and harvest small grain. Trainload of 13<sup>1/4</sup> men and boys went from eastern Kentucky to Maine to work in potato fields. In many counties, women have helped to pull and set tobacco, put up hay, run tractors and combines, and tie up grain sacks. In Boone County, businessmen from Burlington and Walton are working in evenings, on Saturday afternoons and holidays to save crops. Charging prevailing prices, they contribute earnings to local volunteer fire departments. Thousands of boys and girls are helping with Kentucky's war crops. In many counties special agents have been appointed to look after labor situation. Several public schools cooperated by permitting pupils to take time off to pick berries. They will continue through season to help in picking peaches, tomatoes, and other fruit, gathering potatoes, cutting and shucking corn, and priming, cutting, and housing tobacco.

Fertilizer.- Use of ammonium nitrate to increase production has been general this year, although in many instances smaller acreages have been planted. In nine south central counties, 860 tons have been used, 223 tons in Taylor County alone. Jefferson County, in another section, used more than 300 tons, with marked success. Many farmers report twice usual yield on orchard grass and 30 to 50 percent improvement of pastures.

Work methods. - How to increase efficiency of individual worker has been basis of study made by economists at Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station. Results are pictured in leaflets for general distribution entitled "Pulling Tobacco Plants" and "Cutting and Spearing Burley Tobacco."

Homemakers' district meetings. - About 2,500 women attended 7 district meetings in June. Discussion centered on part women are taking in meeting wartime problems.

Increased milk production. - By feeding balanced rations, farmers in Robertson County increased milk production 25 percent. Farmers feeding balanced rations to poultry and sheep have had similar production increases.

Hybrid Corn. - Large acreage increases of hybrid corn are reported from many counties. In Owen County 85 percent of corn planted was hybrid, and many other counties report similar figures. Anderson County, where feed situation is critical because of drought, reports hybrid corn holding up well.

Food production and conservation. - To encourage greater food production, special agents are working in number of counties. Canning, dehydration, and storage are being taught by emergency war food conservation assistants. Working in every county of State, they are trying to save every pound of food possible. As Kentucky has been hard hit by drought for past 2 months or more, need for conservation is great.

TEXAS  
July 1, 1944

Harvesting and labor. - Harvesting of near-record wheat crop in west Texas has been major problem in farm labor situation. Approximately 45 million bushels of wheat is estimated return from this area. Situation is complicated by need for 450 more combines and 800 combine operators, plus 1,000 trucks and drivers and more than 800 farm laborers. Further bottleneck developed in slow movement of railroad cars from terminals to country elevators and shortage of laborers at terminal elevators to unload cars upon arrival. In Denton, Tarrant, and Johnson Counties labor was needed for threshing, cotton chopping, and tractor operation. Cotton choppers were needed in Burleson and adjacent counties of Brazos bottom, in several counties of blackland area, and in number of large cotton-producing counties of central northwest.

Field crops. - Special effort was made to obtain planting of increased acreage to summer grain crops, forage and peanut crops. Chemical treatment was urged for as much cotton, grain and sweet sorghum, and peanut seed as possible, to control seed-borne disease and insure better germination and increased yields. These aims were promoted at group meetings of county agricultural agents and through press releases. Winter grain crops are giving good yields in spite of lack of subsoil moisture at planting time last fall. According to USDA crop report, promised yields of Texas wheat, oats, and barley are much greater than for 1943, and about 100 percent larger than 1933-42 10-year average. Grain sorghum crop in Corpus Christi area is of record proportions and should yield about 10 million bushels of early grain. It is being harvested and yielding 1 to 2 tons an acre. This large production will aid livestock program.

Victory Gardens. - Spring Victory Gardens have progressed into summer gardens, and as early vegetables matured they were replaced by summer varieties. Green beans, tomatoes, onions, white potatoes, and other vegetables are being canned or stored for use during remainder of season. Emphasis is placed upon conservation of early products of gardens to keep wastage at minimum. Fall garden program in south Texas area has begun.

Cotton-improvement program. - Indications are that total of one-variety cotton communities for 1944 will be double that of 1943. Program emphasizes increase in spinning quality of cotton. With yield per acre in mind, cotton growers are encouraged to plant approved varieties which lead in lint per acre and staple and have good spinning qualities. Growers are urged to control cotton insects and to use proper methods of harvesting and ginning.

Mechanical sweetpotato planters. - Labor shortage has forced east Texas farmers to use improvised sweetpotato slip transplanters. To simplify device, extension agricultural engineer made drawing of one design for home construction. Home-made machines not only save some labor but do better job of setting slips than hand method.

Farm forestry. - Assistance from war prisoners in salvaging pulpwood and timber in ice-damaged area of east Texas has not been so satisfactory as expected. Though comparatively little has been salvaged, Angelina County agricultural agent believes about 85 percent of damaged timber on farms in that county will be salvaged. To stimulate this work three farm sawmills were established in area and help was given in improving others. Two-day small sawmill course was conducted at Lufkin by representatives of Extension and Federal and State forestry services. Publications on methods of cutting were sent to county agents, vocational teachers, and others. Experiments in cutting trees with power machines were discussed with manufacturers. Improvements in standard farm sawmill have been made and others planned in both pine and hardwood regions of State.

Cooperative buying. - Reports from 76 counties show that through June about 18,000 families pooled orders and bought total of 19,540 dozen pineapples, or twice number bought cooperatively last year. Larger part of purchase was made directly from importers at Texas-Mexico border, at average estimated saving of \$156.77 per county. Average order per county was 257 dozen. Orders were handled by marketing committees of county home demonstration councils.

Care of milk. - Proper care of milk was emphasized through discussions and exhibits at many county spring dairy shows. Home demonstration clubwomen sponsored exhibit at Hopkins County dairy show, comprising hooded milk pail, good strainer and strainer pads, chlorine and alkaline powders, along with posters describing their uses. Suggestions for cooling milk also were given.

Negro activities. - Special attention has been given to recruiting farm labor in 18 counties served by negro county agricultural agents. Total of 56 meetings were held with preachers, Victory leaders, and others to acquaint them with farm labor program. Cooperation in cultivating and harvesting essential crops was emphasized along with necessity of organizing women and youths in towns. Colored preachers promised to do everything possible to persuade their people to assist farmers in gathering crops. In Smith County preacher was chosen county farm labor recruiter.

More than 450 negro townspeople signed availability cards to help harvest blackberries. Working as member of Limestone County labor-recruiting committee, negro county agent enrolled 300 workers.

To compensate for crop losses from excessive rains, negro farmers are being encouraged to grow more grain sorghums to supplement corn crops. In 36 counties 68 training meetings were held with local leaders with view to increasing sorghum acreage. Already, 15 counties have 56 demonstrations involving 270 acres. Meetings with Liberty County negro farmers resulted in decision to buy cooperatively 3,600 pounds of sorghum seed to plant for hay. By pooling orders, they saved approximately \$1.10 a hundred.

Third annual 4-H Club registered pig shows for negro farm boys of southern, northern, and eastern districts were held at Austin, Henderson, and Crockett. Hogs were judged on breed characteristics as well as weight and body conformation.

